

**Thy Kingdom Come****Session 1****Kingdom Dynamics**

Good Morning! I am excited for us to spend the day together learning about a topic that is a big undertaking but worth our effort. Thank you for being here this morning!

Prayer:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit

We long to know you more. Your vast teachings on your kingdom can be overwhelming. We won't gasp its vastness until we are with you in eternity. For now, teach each of us what you want us to take away from today and help us to enjoy the patient ferment of your kingdom in our midst. Grant us your patience for these teachings to grow in our hearts and lives over time- For your glory and for the sake of the world.

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast immensity of the Sea." Antoine de Saint Exupery- The little Prince.

Various Paradigms to help us understand the Biblical Story:

- Covenant (Last year, Sarah)
- Creation/New Creation
- Promises
- Redemption
- Reconciliation
- They are all important and complement one another

KINGDOM- Matthew 6:33 But seek first His kingdom

- The Kingdom is the unifying concept that connects the OT with the NT
- The phrase "kingdom of God" is not in the Old Testament but "kingdom of the Lord" is, but the concept of Kingdom dominates the whole Biblical story, beginning with creation, and throughout the older testament, God speaks to us of the King and his Kingdom
  - God's People
  - God's Place
  - God's rule

This is covenantal language.

The covenant is an essential aspect of the Kingdom of God. Through God's covenants with man, his kingdom comes to this world. In sum, at the heart of the Kingdom of God is covenant, the sacrificial, sealed relationship between the divine king and his subjects.

Kingdom embraces the whole of the biblical story more than any other imagery

"It is hardly possible to mention any other theme equal in importance to that of the Kingdom of Heaven." Herman Ridderbos

In Eden the Kingdom is revealed

In Abraham the Kingdom is revealed in Israel's history

Abraham & the Patriarchs the Kingdom is promised

Moses & the Exodus the Kingdom is saved and regulated through Covenant

King David and the prophets the kingdom is foreshadowed

King Jesus-The kingdom is at hand

Return of King Jesus the Kingdom is consummated

Kingdom language/imagery is in every book of the Bible-162 x in NT

Kingdom is a difficult/elusive Biblical concept

Layered meaning

Never clearly defined in scripture

Mysterious aspect-we won't have a full understanding this side of eternity

We need God's Spirit to help us here

"The Kingdom is the golden thread woven through the whole of the Gospels" H. Ridderbos

- It is in complete opposition to the waters we swim in
- It's not of this world (John 18:36) but exists in the world and in heaven (Lord's prayer)

When our will is done our kingdom is present, when God's will is done his Kingdom is present

**Kingdom-Jesus' Prominent message**

“It may be rightly said that the whole of the preaching of Jesus X and the apostles is concerned with the Kingdom of God” Herman Ridderbos

**Mark 1:15**

“Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand”

**Luke 4:43**

“But he said, “I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent”

**Luke 8:1**

“Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.

Scripture never defines it

But it gives us many similes to understand (parables)

- Sower
- Wheat/Tares
- Leaven
- Mustard seed
- Hidden Treasure
- Pearl of great price
- Fishing net

Along with Jesus ‘teaching- we also need to look at his kingdom

REMEMBER-The Kingdom comes to us in his person

- He inaugurates the kingdom-the initial stage of the great drama of history’s end arrived in Jesus. The Righteousness of God is now pushing its way, asserting itself, doing violence to the realm of the world’s kingdom \*Ridderbos)  
Through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ (Christ Event) God has established a “Beach head” for the advancement of his kingdom
- Through Jesus’ kingdom initiative and advancing God, show us His mission for the world. -For God to redeem the world through the work and Person of Jesus Christ.
- There will be different responses to Christ and his Kingdom

- Jesus reveals the kingdom to his disciples but not to those who have not been given the kingdom. “To those who have ears to hear” Matt 13:11

Definition:

“The rule of an eternal, sovereign God over all the universe, ruled by King Jesus.” Kuyper

Good definition but the N.T. is getting at something more than this.

RC Sproul;

“If the kingdom of God consists of all of the universe over which God reigns, why would anyone announce that the kingdom of God was near or about to come to pass. Obviously, John the Baptist and Jesus meant something more about this concept of the Kingdom of God.”

Currently a Spiritual Kingdom

God has always ruled over his creation-Kuyper quote

“There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, mine!”

Favorite Definition- Christopher Wright

“The Kingdom of God is the RULE of God over his PEOPLE in his CREATION. Established by his messiah in the new covenant, which is now present in the world, awaiting its fulfillment at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ.”

Roots of NT teaching on kingdom are in the O.T. then launched in Christ.

“The kingdom of God (Mark 1:15) and Christ's death for our sins (I Corinthians 15:2) may emerge in the NT as fully blossomed concepts, but they are truly the fruit of roots that have grown in the soil of the OT, constantly intertwined and ultimately stemming from the same seed” (Gen 3:15) Jeremey Treat

### **The Kingdom and Old Testament Prophecy-**

Inaugurated in Christ but not a new concept to God's people

**Isaiah** -Kingdom should be the entry point for organizing the books' major themes

Isaiah 6-Royal throne room-Present reign of God's kingship

He is high and lifted up, Thrice Holy-Judge who rules over the nations and will invite people from all nations to his table to partake of his Kingdom

Isaiah -written 700 years before X birth

40:1-5 Isaiah comforts Israel with the promise of a Messiah.

"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

\*\*\*Jesus reads Isaiah 40 in the temple Luke 4

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written.

"The Spirit of the LORD is upon me,  
 Because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor  
 And he has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
 And recovering of sight to the blind,  
 To set at liberty those who are oppressed  
 To proclaim the year of the LORD'S favor."  
 And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down.  
 And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them.  
 "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus words of Kingly inaugurated caused some to marvel  
 "Isn't this Joseph's son?  
 Others were filled with wrath

The kingdom had come  
 It had come in a person  
 It had come in a person who disappointed their expectations. BOILING  
 CAULDRON

It provoked wickedness as the King had come and would cause the rise and fall of many in power.

ASLAN is on the move, the ice is melting, and Satan's territory is suffering violence

"In Jesus Christ we witness the long-awaited vindication and effective demonstration of God's Kingship in the world. The coming of Christ is the climax of the whole history of redemption recorded in the scriptures. The rightful King **has established a beach head in his territory and call on his subjects to press his claims ever farther into creation.**" Al Wolters, "Creation Regained"

### Reactions to Jesus Kingship announcement

#### Confusion-

- He wasn't a military leader
- He was not bringing down the Roman Empire
- He was a local boy
- John the Baptist- "Are you the one, or should we wait for another?"  
"Go back and tell John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleaned, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the good news proclaimed to the poor." (So diff than how we share the gospel)
- Disciples confused – "Can we sit at your right hand? Mark 10:37
- Demons were not confused-knew exactly who he was  
They cried out  
"What do you want with us Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?"  
"I know who you are, the holy one of Israel.  
They were afraid, because the advancing of God's Kingdom was the beginning of the demise of theirs.

## Christ Preached and lived Kingdom Gospel

### The GOOD NEWS! (Matthew 4:23)

- Revolutionary (Not military)- With His coming to earth, God's saving rule and reign has come near in a way that's never happened before in all of human history.
- God's promises to establish his kingdom are beginning to be fulfilled
- Global implications-YET includes -what Jesus has done to save sinners (you & I)
- Jesus defines his mission "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God"
- He declares the Kingdom and invites people in
- Parables:
  - Kingdom is of inestimable value
  - Kingdom starts small and grows exponentially
  - Is hidden from some and revealed to God's elect
  - Requires workers
  - It is difficult to tell who is in the kingdom and who is not-BEWARE Matt 5-7
- The Sermon on the Mount- 1<sup>st</sup> great example of Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom.
  - \*Radical demand for love
  - \* Radical demand for reliance on God
  - \*Counter-cultural- "You have heard it said, but I say"
  - \*The commands of the SOTM should not be separated from the cross
  - \*Less of a check list, more a description of the Kingdom
  - \*The "endowment" of the Kingdom produces good works. (Ridderbos)

### His acts reveal his kingship

Christ's Kingdom Activities are considered the First fruits of the Kingdom

Heals, casts out demons- The Great moment of the breaking down of Satan's rule had come!

- Gives Hope to the marginalized: Poor, sick, women, possessed, expendable
- Raises the dead
- Purchases the Kingdom =through his victorious death and resurrection he satisfies the wrath of God, defeats Satan, Sin and death, overcomes the world, the flesh and the Devil, and destroyed the power of the Kingdom of darkness

- Through the Cross, Jesus proves himself to be the rightful ruler of the Kingdom! Jesus' healings and miracles signify redemption from all evil and the restoration of the whole of life. His miracles and message are to be viewed within the coming of the kingdom in its fullness. The end has broken into the middle.
- Suffering- The kingdom requires suffering. Jews could not comprehend a suffering King.
- His followers are called to suffer as well. - Jews at that time had no understanding of a suffering messiah, or that when he came; they would be called to suffer.

In his LIFE Jesus announces, launches and makes known the kingdom

In his DEATH Jesus accomplishes the victory of the kingdom over all that stands against it

In his RESURRECTION Jesus inaugurates the kingdom in the midst of history

In his ASCENSION Jesus takes up the throne of the kingdom and rules history guiding to the completed kingdom

In his PAROUSIA (Second coming) Jesus consummates the kingdom

## Kingdom Attributes

**Eschatological-** last days, last epoch of human history before his return

. Ushers in the "Last days" The kingdom is now at hand.

The door has been opened

Restoration of all of creation has begun.

**Gentile inclusion** -God's kingdom goes global

(Foreshadowed in Edom, Ruth, Naaman, Nineveh, God has always had a heart for the nations)

\*\*\*\*\*RAHAB- gentile in Jesus' lineage

Jesus cleanses the temple-we focus on the money changers, "My house shall be a house of prayer for all people. Mat 21:13, Mark 11:17, Luke 19:46

- Women at the well-Samaritan, first person other than disciples he disclosed his identity to. ½ Jew, ½ Syrian, Half breed, tainted blood
- Syrophenician woman- Mark 7:26 Daughter possessed
- Roman soldier – "Jesus marveled at him, "I tell you not even in Israel have I found such faith. Luke 9:7 Aslan is on the move
- Jesus was calling the gentiles into his kingdom



- All the OT promises & foreshadowing of Gentile inclusion have come to fulfillment
- “And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom that all people, nations and languages should serve him: And his dominion was an everlasting dominion, which should not pass away and his Kingdom shall never be destroyed.” Daniel 7:9
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### **Upside- Down Kingdom**

- Counter cultural
- Different from Earthly Kingdoms- “not of this world.” John 18:36
- Sermon on the Mount
  - Love your enemies
  - Do good to those who hate you
  - Poor exalted
  - Rich brought down
  - Brings rulers down Luke 1:52
- Servants are leaders
- Widows, children Orphans, women and the poor are shown deference
- First shall be last
- Offenders are forgiven
- Ethnic outsiders are to be embraced
- Fools and children shame the wise
- Rich become poor
- Works in reverse of the world’s kingdoms-not driven by ungodly power, greed and oppression but my self-sacrifice, laying down your life
- To gain life, you have to lose yours
- Not entered into by merit, pedigree, but by faith in Christ
- You can’t earn it but it requires your life-Acts 20:24, “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God
- Earthly power methods don’t work in the Kingdom
  - “When the church tries to embody the rule of God in the forms of earthly power it may achieve that power, but it is no longer a sign of the kingdom” Lesslie Newbigin

### **A Cruciform Kingdom**

- Kingdom is founded by the cross, entered into through the cross and shaped by the cross

- Kingdom is shaped by the cross and all that it stands for and all it accomplishes
- The Cross enables and advances God's Kingdom
- God advances his kingdom through the church as it seeks and conforms to the cross
- At the cross-2 crucial things took place-both of which are critical for understanding the kingdom
  1. The powers were defeated- and Jesus gave his life as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of his people.  
Colossians 2:13-15 ,

“ He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”

In this passage we see 2 results of the Cross that are necessary for God's kingdom:

**He forgave the sins of his Kingdom** People through bring a substitute for us, and the recipient of God's wrath. This idea, Penal substitution, is not popular today. It is crucial to the story line of Scripture culminating in the kingdom of God.

Somehow our culture that is dripping with bloodshed and violence, find it palatable in many arenas but not in the Cross-isn't that curious?

A culture that's fixated on both violence and Justice-cannot tolerate the only righteous purposeful violence which took place on the Cross, which is imperative for accomplishing the justice of God's coming kingdom.

The empire rages for the justice of the Kingdom but they want it without bowing the knee to the crucified King. The Cross is a rock of offence.

**He rendered powerless the powers and authorities of the evil realm,  
His kingdom can now go forth through the lives of his people and the church**

The Cross:

Makes the Kingdom Possible

Forms, gives shape to the kingdom

Establishes and advances God's kingdom

He is sanctifying us to conform us to the cross by the cross-to advance his kingdom

As wonderful, amazing and glorious as our individual salvation is, Christ's intention was never simply to provide a way to get us to heaven- Our understanding of the kingdom is truncated when our understanding of the Cross is truncated  
The gospel of the kingdom is wider, broader, deeper and more glorious than this. He was committed to bringing the benefits of heaven to earth- and this is accomplished first and foremost through the Cross- through the benefits and accomplishments of Christ's atonement.

The cross is the victory of the kingdom of God.

"Christ's atoning death on the cross creates a communing of ransomed people living under the reign of God (Rev 1:6). Inasmuch as God's kingdom is founded by the cross, entered through the cross and shaped by the cross, it is truly a cruciform kingdom.' Jeremey Treat

"In short, the kingdom and the cross are held together by Christ, who brings God's reign on earth through his atoning death on the Cross. The Kingdom is the ultimate goal of the cross." Jeremy Treat

### **Everlasting Kingdom**

- Gabriel to Mary-Luke 1:33, "His kingdom shall have no end"
- Psalm 145:13 "Your kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom
- Psalm 45:6 "Your throne O God is forever and ever"
- Daniel 7:14

"And to Him was given dominion, glory and a Kingdom  
That all the people, nations and men of every language might serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away. And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed."

Bird & Wright

“Kings and empires may rage and conspire against God and his anointed king, but they are doomed to failure. They are like ants building a rampart against a lion.”

Like Ozymandias in Percy Bysshe Shelley’s poem- the man who once ruled a vast empire is nothing more than a decaying stature in ruins. A piece of the crumbled statue reads:

My name is Ozymandias, King of kings, look on my works, ye mighty and despair!”

He thought he was invincible, but now all that remains of him is debris

All earthly empires will be

Weighed

Measured

Found wanting

They will eventually crumble

Only the true King has a kingdom that is everlasting.

### **Present/Future, Already and not yet**

Present

- Current reality
- Already partially fulfilled, (The King has come!) SPEGHETTI I DINNER
- Something believers experience and live in now.
  - “It is not necessary for the believer to wait until the last day to experience resurrection life” D.A. Carson
- Currently difficult to see. We see the wicked flourish and the righteous suffer
- The kingdom is revealed/ EXPANDED in small, unseen acts of obedience right now in the already
- We NEED kingdom eyes

Zach Eswine

“As you enter ministry, you will be tempted to orient your desires toward doing **LARGE** things in famous ways as **fast** and as efficiently as you can. But take note,

A crossroad waits for you. Jesus is that crossroads. Almost anything in life that truly matters will require you to do small, mostly overlooked things, over a long period of time.”

wives,  
 Mothers,  
 Caretakers  
 Students  
 Employees

I think we sometimes miss the already aspect of the kingdom because we don't slow down or contemplate enough where God is already at work. It's easier to be sucked into the wickedness we see in the media and miss small acts that evidence God's kingdom

Our impatience also adds to this-we are being formed by our environment that want fast and flashy.

“If I am bored with ordinary people in ordinary places, then am I not bored with what God delights in? Eswine

## Future

(To be covered fully in session 3)

There is a future aspect to God's Kingdom rule in Christ.

The Kingdom will come in its fullness

- The Kingdom of God is within us (His children) Luke 17:20-21
- It is revealed first in Christ and now through his people
- It is revealed in God ruling in the hearts of his people
- “In your midst” Jesus telling the Pharisees that he brought the kingdom of God to earth as a foretaste.
- Unshakeable- unlike the kingdoms of men
- Deals primarily within the hearts of his people/church
- The kingdom is MORE than the church, though the church is its chief agent. God's chosen vessel to spread the kingdom also includes ANGELS, His divine council, non-human creation

In his LIFE Jesus announces, launches and makes known the kingdom

In his DEATH Jesus accomplishes the victory of the kingdom over all that stands against it

In his RESURRECTION Jesus inaugurates the kingdom in the midst of history

In his ASCENSION Jesus takes up the throne of the kingdom and rules history guiding it to the completed kingdom

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“It may be rightly said that the whole of the preaching of Jesus Christ and his apostles is concerned with the kingdom of God and that in Jesus Christ’s proclamation of the kingdom we are face to face with the specific form of expression of the whole of his revelation of God.”

~Herman Ridderbos

Concluding remarks:

The kingdoms of men come and go; all of them have an ending

The Kingdom of God is opposed to the empires of the world

The kingdom of God is based on service, self-sacrificing love

The kingdom is here, but not completely

The Kingdom has come in the person of Jesus Christ

It is accomplished and formed by the cross. Without the cross there is no kingdom.

“The seeking of the Kingdom of God is the chief business of the Christian.” Jonathan Edwards

We will not come to a full understanding of God’s Kingdom today, but I’ve been praying that today would spark our imaginations.

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John in Revelation- epistle, not heavy on instruction- We are ushered in the throne room of eternity. God, through John, knew we needed images of the fulfilled kingdom.

As seeking the Kingdom is our first responsibility- we need instruction for sure, but to sustain this quest over our entire lives we need a vision, a captured imagination inflamed by the Holy Spirit, focused on the Kingdom of God throughout history but also in our very midst.

Jonathan Edwards said "The seeking of the Kingdom of God is the chief business of the Christian"

Do you know this King? Are you part of His kingdom?

Are you seeking God's kingdom as your top priority?

Is the kingdom of God forming you?

Let him who has ears hear.

Pray:

Father Give us eyes and hearts for your kingdom. Give us a yearning from your Spirit to make the seeking of your kingdom our highest aim. In flame our imaginations to seek you like never before. We are often weary, give us strength, courage and resolve to live as kingdom daughters- for your glory. Amen

